



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

DECORATIVE TEXTILE FABRICS

FRENCH DRAPERY.



FASHION in hangings, like the fashion in everything else that appertains to house-furnishing, has altered very much of late years, and that, too, in the right direction. The introduction of delightful colors and the use of well-designed materials, as well as a popular liking for greater simplicity in drapery, have combined to make chaste and simple curtains fashionable.

We are inclined, perhaps too frequently, to consider the drapery of Parisian

design as far too fussy and extravagant for American tastes, and hence the expression "French Drapery" has gradually come to mean a more or less elaborate arrangement of festoons and tails with cords and tassels grouped and hung in charming confusion and with studied richness of effect. As a matter of fact, however, this is not correct. Most of the middle-class drapery that is being shown in Paris at the present time is of a character so simple and subdued, that it may well be held up as a criterion of really good taste. Far from being too elaborate or involved in design, French drapery may, perhaps, from a house-furnisher's point of view, be said at the present time to err rather on the side of economy and severity; and in illustration of the justness of our remarks, we would point to the several sketches that we give upon these two pages. All of them have been sketched from actual Parisian examples, and as such they will, we are sure, be acceptable to our readers as *practical* and useful patterns of inexpensive hangings, which may be appropriately introduced into the drawing rooms and bedrooms of our modern three hundred dollars a year house. Of course the leading French firms are still producing and exhibiting luxurious designs, which are as exquisite in effect as they are extravagant in costliness. Such designs, however, are not in every day demand in France, and much less are they popularly required in this country. We would point out how charmingly simple are some of the French designs that we have illustrated, and how admirably they are suited to our own middle-class tastes.

The window drapery illustrated is, indeed, most modest in design, and exemplifies with what simple means our tasteful contemporaries can produce a pretty and effective drapery. Their skill in this direction is proverbial, and the easy manner in which the valance of this particular drapery is made unusual and pretty by merely being pulled up slightly from one corner, deserves that sincere flattery which so often takes the form of imitation in our craft. As a bedroom hanging this design is excellent, and the employment of our fashionable and cheap art materials will in nowise mar its effectiveness.

Suggestion for a portière is given. The effect of the straight valance and sidepieces that drop right down to the floor with the plain bands of braid stitched along them, is in harmony with the sturdy Renaissance wood work, which even now finds favor in modern French drawing rooms. In this country such a design would be admirable for a library, or the entrance into a small hall.

The third sketch is a light and fanciful drapery, which might with advantage be reproduced in our bedrooms and boudoirs. Suspending the entire hanging from the wall by means of cords is a capital idea, and a bold departure from the use of the orthodox cornice and pole.

Throughout all their less extravagant draperies the French artists evince such versatility and playfulness of fancy, that it hardly seems as though much study and careful thought have been devoted to their planning and arrangement. It is in such free tastefulness, however, that they excel, and the few sketches of their fashionable, inexpensive hangings that we have given will, we trust, prove acceptable and serviceable to our practical readers.

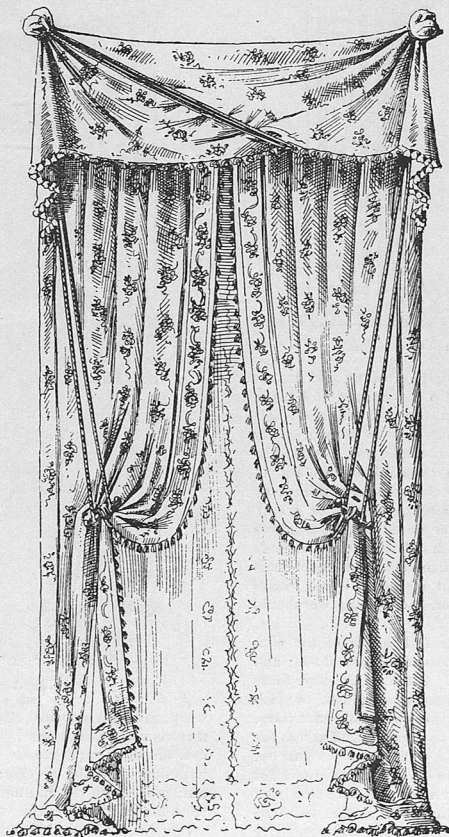
Of late years the majority of our American draperies, and upholstered goods as well, have been touching the two extremes of severity and over-fussiness. Straight valances and severely simple curtains have been the vogue among those who advocate the use of very little drapery in the decoration of doors and windows; whilst, among others, a taste for elaborate curtains and festoons have been equally rife. Those of our readers who visited the Chicago Exhibition will remember how exquisitely the French firms arranged their displays, and how delightfully they set them off with the aid of drapery.

The curtains and portières in a drawing room are among the most important items in the apartment, and not only attract the attention at once, but they very frequently make or mar the complete effect. Therefore, when we consider this important branch of our business, we naturally turn toward Paris for our patterns.

THE DRAPERY ERA.

NEVER before have draperies played so important a part in the furnishing of our homes, adding, when well chosen, the last touch of comfort, daintiness, and beauty. We have, fortunately, passed through the chaotic, overdone period, when draperies were a craze and every chair, table, shelf, cabinet and picture was looked upon as merely a coign of vantage, whereon some fearful and wonderful construction of silk or gauze, lace or embroidery, could be displayed. How he lived through it is really matter for surprise, and shows the wonderful vitality of the human race; but were the truth known, probably many an epitaph should read, "Died of sashing and bowing up her parlor."

It is now quite generally understood that the only use for draperies of this sort—on furniture, pictures, etc.—is when it is necessary to make a special background to bring out the beauties of a picture, statuette or rare bit of porcelain. Our vases

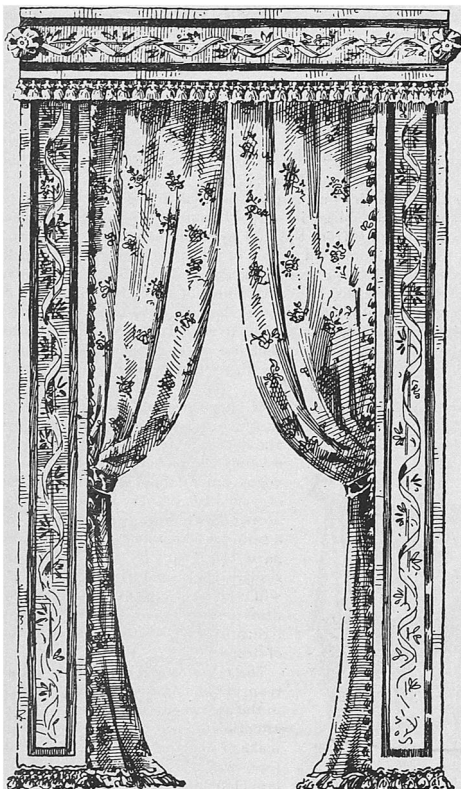


DESIGN FOR BEDROOM WINDOWS.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

and bronzes are considered dressed without sashes; and that terror of man, sometimes asserted to have been invented for his special undoing, the old-time tidy or chair back, is relegated to "innocuous desuetude."

One of the most important things in the furnishing of our homes is the curtaining and draping of the windows. These are the eyes of the home which look out upon the world, and by whose expression the vast unknown world that never crosses our portal, never comes nearer than



SUGGESTION FOR A PORTIERE.

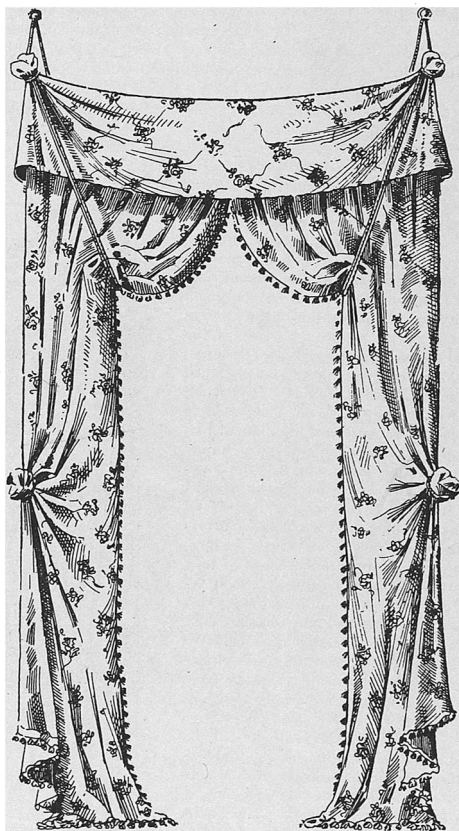
to look squarely into our "eyes," forms its opinion of us, and judges not only our social status, means, etc., but also our culture and taste. When you see the showy lace curtains drawn back, so that the whole centre of the window can be occupied by a huge vase, or koro, of gaudy imitation Satsuma, or something equally pretentious, you need not be surprised to learn that the servants' rooms in such a house are bare of all suggestion of comfort; and very probably one would not need to go so far as that to find the evidences of "sparing to spend," or spending for barest show. Nothing should ever be placed in the windows purely for display. The chance glimpses of handsome furnishings or rare bric-a-brac which the advantageous arrangement of the room occasionally discloses are sometimes charming, but we should by no means call upon the outside world to admire our household gods; we should hold them too choice for that.

Sash-curtains are quite generally now the full length of the window and come next it; inside-toward the room—is the shade; and outside of that are the full drapery curtains. Often, in the city, there are two sets of these—heavy brocatelle, velvet, or plush, or rich Oriental weaves, in addition to those of lace. For the full sash curtains, the latest fancy is tamboured Swiss, finished on the edge and across the bottom with a ruffle, also embroidered; they cost from \$3 per pair up. Pretty ones also are made of polka-dotted Swiss. The preference for these, in the city, is pure white, and they are more generally tied back with a white ribbon than with a color. In sumptuous houses sash curtains of Irish point, Venetian guipure and other rich and expensive

laces are used, and often these are but slightly wider than the window, hanging down straight with but scant fullness, and not tied back. For the half length sash-curtains a great variety of materials are used; among them are scrim, Madras, dotted Swiss, silkoline, crepe cloth, and plain or figured China and India silks. For the silk curtains, yellows and yellow greens are a popular choice; and, indeed, in all house-furnishing a great deal of yellow is used, its value in cheerfulness and brightness being more and more recognized. These curtains are often made in one piece, quite full, and hang from a brass rod fastened to the top of the lower sash.

Among the cotton fabrics for summer draperies, nothing can exceed in beauty the Japanese stuffs. There are plain cotton *crepes* in soft *fade* tints of blue, olive, old-rose, terra-cotta and greenish yellow, which are so perfect in tone that artists rave over them; as they are twenty-seven inches wide and cost but 25 cents per yard, they are within the reach of the most modest purse. If used for portieres, they should be lined with cheese cloth, satine or French cambric; but for window curtains, and for curtaining library shelves—indeed, for most other purposes—the lining is unnecessary.

Shifu cloth, which was a novelty two years ago, is another very effective Japanese fabric; it is shot or *chinked* with irregular dashes of color upon color, in two-toned effects usually, though occasionally contrasting; the threads of the woof are much heavier than those of the



LIGHT AND FANCIFUL DRAPERY.

warp, giving it a corded effect, and at irregular distances gold or silver threads are woven across. This can be had in all desirable colors; the new bluish or "art" greens, shot with dull reds and brown; light blue with dark, and the reverse; red, old rose and terra-cotta; lemon and tan; pink, with red and blue. It is a yard wide, and costs from 50 to 75 cents per yard. This is a serviceable and effective material for piazza furnishings, chair cushions, hammock pillows, etc.; and, indeed,

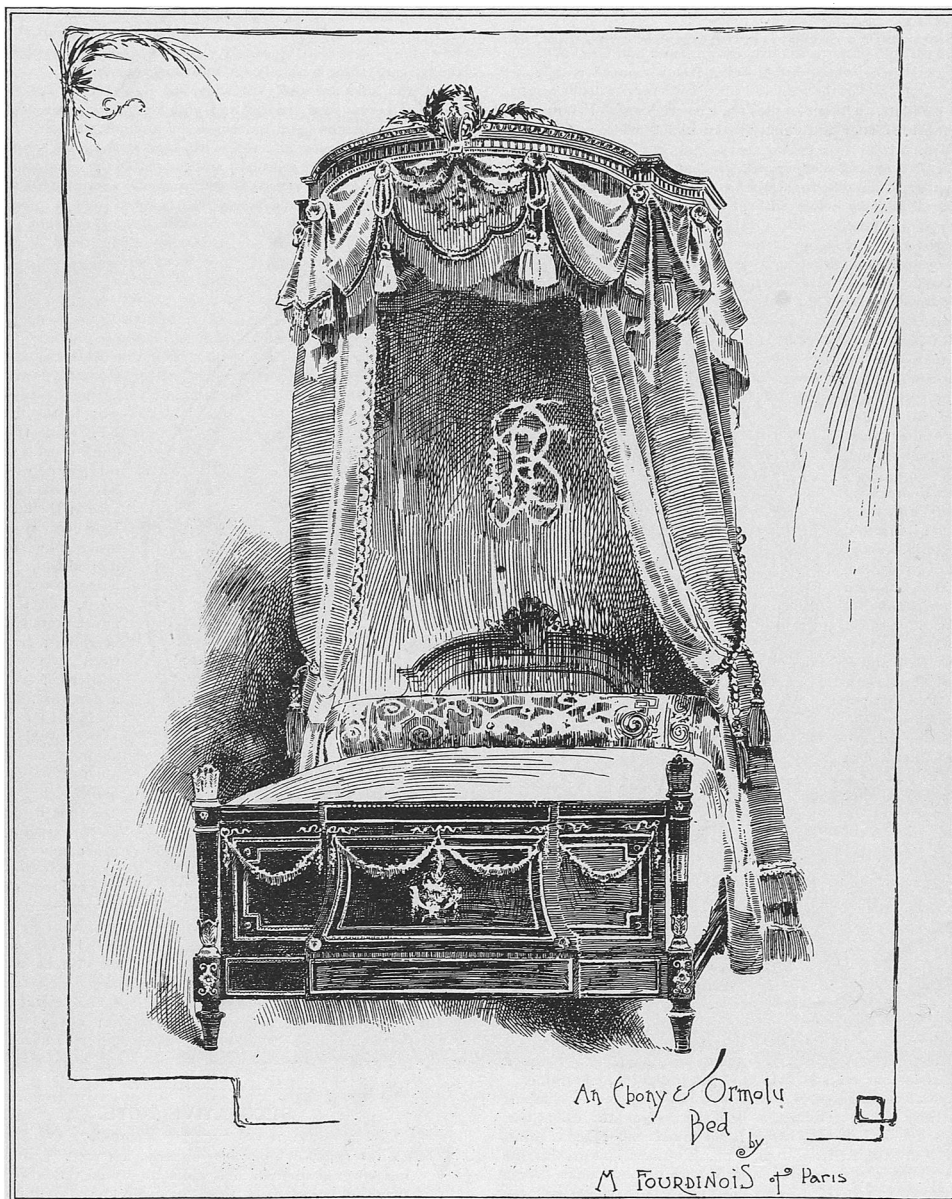
THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

one is always safe in choosing any of the Japanese fabrics where durability is essential, as the dyes are, in most cases, sun and water proof. Beautiful portières and curtains of the *shifu* cloth come embroidered all over with bold designs, either in gold thread or heavy outlining of silk threads; these cost from \$6.50 to \$10 per pair.

The *hechima crepe* is such an established favorite that it is considered a standard and staple fabric, and where blue and white effects are

cushions, and even the walls; and the *crepe* for curtains, divan cushions, bed and toilet drapery, etc. There is a very narrow *crepe*, not more than three-eighths of a yard wide, matching the *hechima* in color and of similar designs, which makes a very effective frieze if the walls are covered with denim.

So many are the varieties of these fascinating *crepes* that it is almost impossible to mention all. One sort, soft and light in texture, has a



desired, nothing can be more satisfactory. It comes in all manner of quaint Oriental patterns of dark china blue on a white ground, is thirty inches wide, costs 50 cents per yard, and the colors will last as long as the fabric. A charmingly cool effect can be gained for a summer morning room or for bedrooms, by combining *hechima crepe* and blue denim in the furnishing, using the latter for portières, divan covers, chair

stragglings all-over conventionalized pattern in gold lines, guaranteed never to tarnish; in these are many shades of tawny yellows, greens, old pink, dull blues and *écru*. Curtains of the same, in bold and showy patterns, can be bought for \$3.50 per pair, and the fabric by the yard costs from 25 to 50 cents. Others, heavier in texture, have similar patterns in light or dark shades upon a ground of the same color; these

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

are very desirable, and make pretty cushion covers or summer draperies for libraries and sitting-rooms.

Our home manufacturers have put upon the market an attractive cotton *crepe* one yard wide which sells for 17 cents per yard. The designs are conventionalized and the colors very good, and the pattern is printed through and through, so the fabric is practically double-faced, a very great advantage. This, in old rose, with pattern in dark red, would combine effectively with the dull red denim as described above for *hechima crepe* with blue.

Almost more attractive than China silk are the silk and-linen Japanese *crepes* with bold patterns in olive, old-pink and dull blue, on cream or yellow grounds, the whole design being freely stamped with gold; the shimmer and sheen of the gold and silk give an indescribable brightness, and simulate, without imitating, the richness of far more expensive fabrics. They are twenty seven inches wide, and cost 48 cents per yard.

The so-called swivel silks, or silk gingham, are introduced this season in patterns suitable for draperies, and are called art brocades; they are in all delicate colors with pretty floral patterns in natural colors thrown broadcast over the brocaded ground. They are thirty-two inches wide, and are regularly offered at 55 cents a yard; but some special sales have been made of them for 29 cents. These are effective in carrying out floral schemes of decoration, and being softer than cretonne, drape much more gracefully.

Prettier than cheap lace curtains are those of snow-flake; it is a thin cotton material about the weight of grenadine, usually cream white with horizontal stripes of dull color, green, old-rose, red and yellow. It is very wide, double-fold, and is now offered at 11 cents per yard. Pattern curtains of snow flake with silk stripes and fringed across the bottoms cost \$4.50 per pair.

Madras is another material greatly to be commended instead of cheap lace; it drapes gracefully, and can be had in many soft, harmonious tints, tawny yellows, dull blues, cream and olive are all good. It is double-fold, forty-five to fifty inches wide, price from 28 to 68 cents per yard. While it is suitable for summer use it can also be used the year round anywhere where lace would be appropriate. Indian Madras is a much handsomer fabric, and lends itself admirably to gorgeous effects, as its bold Oriental designs and rich coloring suggest sumptuousness, ease and luxury. It is as soft and pliable as the common stuff, but heavier, and costs \$1.48 to \$1.95 per yard, fifty inches wide.

A new stuff in our shops, which is admirably adapted to combine with the artistic Morris cretonnes, as both the designs and colors harmonize, is a double-fold and double-faced muslin called India print. The patterns are copied from tropical plants of luxuriant growth, the great leaves, buds, and flowers running riot in natural colors over a cream or pale gray ground. As only pure vegetable dyes are used, the fabric is sun and water proof, and its cost is but 50 cents per yard. The designs are so large that they are only suited for spacious rooms, but a delightful and unique interior could be arranged in a roomy summer cottage with this stuff for window or bed curtains, and a Morris cretonne—price 95 cents—for divan cover and chair cushions.

China and India silks increase in beauty of color and design every year; yet while all are pretty, we find on examination that there are

China silks and China silks! There are certain special kinds that greatly exceed in beauty of texture the ordinary ones. *Shikū* silks are heavy and firm yet soft and pliable as the thinnest, with an irregularity in the threads of the wool that increases their beauty. The patterns are very effective and in all desirable colors, and they are full yard wide, price \$1 25; for some purposes the plain colors are even more effective, and often the best results are secured by using the two together, as a lavish use and repetition of any design fatigues the eye, and a grateful repose is given by the solid color. These cost only \$1.10 per yard, and all the delightful, soul-satisfying, artistic tints can be found—queer dull blues, olive greens, greenish yellows and *fade* pinks—everything to satisfy the most exigent taste.

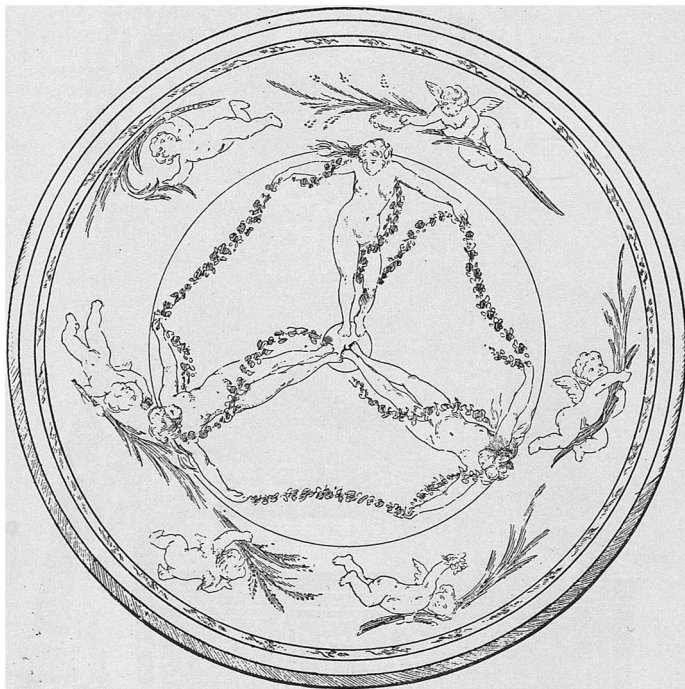
Corah silks are also yard wide, but lighter than the *shikū*; they come in seven yard lengths and cost \$11.50 per piece. They are in unique set designs upon various light grounds, and also in rich dark grounds, blue, green and red, with very striking Egyptian designs. Among floral motives especially to be noted is the poppy pattern; this can be had in a great variety of colors, shades and combinations. Very striking is a brilliant red poppy with natural foliage on a dark blue

ground; but one of the prettiest is the deep orange colored flower on a cream ground. These cost \$1 per yard.

Very lovely effects are produced by draping a width of silk over the tops of lace curtains, letting one end hang half way to the floor at the side, while the other is quite short. Over plain fabrics the drapery may be figured, and over figured it should be plain. It is every woman's ambition now to achieve individuality in her home, to express herself in it, and to have an interior totally unlike her neighbors, but giving forth everywhere suggestions of comfort, ease and beauty. To accomplish this, though it is very convenient, it is not an indispensable condition that one have *carte blanche* in spending. The wealth of materials at our disposal, of every grade and price, is so great that the most important requisite is time to consider and plan, and judgment in selection.

Hap-hazard and hasty

buying simply because a thing is pretty in itself without consideration as to its ultimate use, produces an unsatisfactory, conglomerate result that will ever torment the weak victim of this method—without method—of furnishing her home. It is a safe rule always to think, not twice, but four times, before buying a thing simply because it is pretty and cheap.—*Demorest's Family Magazine*.



CENTRAL PANEL FOR A CEILING IN PAINTED TAPESTRY.

DECORATIVE NOTE.

VERY few colors in upholstery material are proof against the fading power of sunlight, and while we would rather re-cover our furniture occasionally, than "sit in darkness," still it is well to remember that no one of taste really prefers miserable, time worn and faded fabrics, unless we except old rugs, whose age without decay is a charm. Even here, perhaps the temptation is strong to say "a few last words" for some of our beautiful American rugs—but to return to the sun; we must limit our luxurious "basking in its rays" to a reasonable extent unless we wish to re-cover our furniture almost before we are fairly accustomed to its use.